

DIME NOVEL ROUND-UP

A monthly magazine devoted to the collecting, preservation and literature of the old-time dime and nickel novels, libraries and popular story papers.

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Whole No. 294

Wyoming's Wild Riders and Other Hunted Men

Fourth and last of a series of articles about famous bandits and badmen of the Old West in dime novels

By J. Edward Leithead



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Although it was the greatest brotherhood of bandits and rustlers in the far West, captained by an outlaw who had more than murderous efficiency to account for his leadership, Butch Cassidy (George Leroy Parker), the Wild Bunch or the Hole-in-the-Wall Gang inspired no long series of dime novels such as did the James Boys, the Youngers, the Daltons and Henry Starr. The Wild Bunch ranged far in their depredations, covering portions of Wyoming, Montana, Colorado and Utah. They robbed banks and railway trains, held up the six-horse Concord stages and stole cattle.

Mere mention of the gang conjures up names like The Sundance Kid (Harry Longbaugh), Kid Curry (Harvey Logan), Ben Kilpatrick, the Tall Texan, Harry Tracy, and always Butch Cassidy, to name but a few. Even women were attracted to the Wild Bunch, handling guns and horses like the men, Laura Bullion and Etta Place. Charlie Siringo, the celebrated cowboy detective, was one of the lawmen who trailed the gang, working for the Pinkertons.

Butch Cassidy and the Hole-in-the-

Wall Gang were pitted against young Diamond Dick in three early issues of Diamond Dick, Jr. Weekly (apparently not reprints from Diamond Dick Library, but new stories): #122, Diamond Dick, Jr.'s Deputy, or, A Return Ticket Without Charge, #123, Diamond Dick, Jr.'s Vanguard, or, A Fight on the Deputies' Side and #124 Diamond Dick, Jr.'s Bogus Ball, or, A Dance to Lively Music.

#122, dated February 11, 1899, opens with a conversation between an Eastern capitalist "come west to investigate a mining property" of which the other man in the dialogue is "discoverer and owner," and a great deal of fact material about Cassidy is disclosed in their talk:

"Any outlaw" (says the capitalist 'who can cause the governors of four States to come together to hatch a plan for his disposal must be a chap of some importance, I imagine.'

"Well, you can just bet your surplus silver that Bold Butch Cassidy is a chap of some importance" (returns the mine-owner). 'He is the King of the Outlaws, and is at the head of about 500 desperadoes. He is a bad man from 'way back, the worst

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Ads should be submitted by the 15th of the month in order to assure publication in the following month's issue,

in four States'." ("W. B. Lawson"—probably T. C. Harbaugh or T. W. Hanshew—who authored all three stories, hadn't overestimated the number of Butch's gang.)

Later on the mine-owner adds:

"In the face of the doings of Butch Cassidy and his five hundred, the crimes of Jesse James and his followers dwindle to insignificance. Ever since the Live Stock Commission drove the Wyoming rustlers out of business, several years ago (he may be referring to the Johnson County War, 1892, though Butch's whereabouts seem uncertain at that time), Cassidy has been a thorn in the flesh to the authorities of the four States mentioned'." ("Lawson" says Utah, Idaho, Colorado and Wyoming—he should have eliminated Idaho and included Montana).

Bertie Wade invades the Hole-in-the-Wall, but doesn't catch Butch at once. However, young Diamond Dick is in danger all the way, as may be guessed. He captures Cassidy in the second story of the series, only to have him get away at the last minute. Finally, in the third story, with the help of Handsome Harry, Diamond Dick, Jr., gets the handcuffs on Butch and brings him in. This finale, of course, isn't true to the facts, since Cassidy's windup came in South America, along with The Sundance Kid. When George C. Jenks was writing the Diamond Dick tales, some years later, he had Dick, Handsome Harry, Billy Doo and Belle Bellair go into the Hole-in-the-Wall, but they were then in pursuit of fictional outlaws, not Butch Cassidy's gang.

The following three tales in New Nick Carter Weekly were about Harvey Logan, alias Kid Curry, member of Cassidy's Hole-in-the-Wall band, all by Frederick Van Rensselaer Day—#556, A Bad Man of Montana, or, Nick Carter's Chase of an Outlaw, #557, The Man from Arizona, or, Nick Carter Swims to Victory, and #558, Kid Curry's Last Stand, or, Nick Carter in Dangerous Surroundings. With his usual skill, Mr. Dey re-created these outlaw characters so that they came alive, ruthless and

menacing, on the printed page.

The outlaw Rube Burrows (Westbrook left off the "s" in his name, but it is correctly spelled with an "s" in all Street & Smith publications relating to him) was the subject of a few dime novels. A Westbrook Company advertisement of the biography published by them, here quoted in full, gives this brief sketch of him:

"Known in Alabama and throughout the adjacent States as 'The Prince of Train Robbers,' Rube Burrow held up the railroad flyers and looted the safes in the express cars for four years ere he was finally killed. Hundreds of detectives were sent out to capture him, but his arrest was actually accomplished by a huge negro. Even after he was in jail, by a clever ruse, he made his captors prisoners."

I'm not sure that Rube himself was ever jailed, but his brother Jim was, when the law overtook them at Nashville, Tenn. Rube escaped that time by unraveling lead. Jim never rejoined the gang after landing in the Little Rock calaboose, dying within a year's time. Rube had another brother besides Jim who worked under him, whose name I don't know, and there were also two brothers named Brock in the robber outfit; and at one time a man named Joe Jackson, who figured in an S. & S. novel, Log Cabin Library #96.

They operated not only in Arkansas and Alabama (which was Rube's home State) but in Texas. In fact, Rube lived in Texas part of the time. An imposing array of rewards for these train robbers piled up, offered by railroad companies, the States of Arkansas, Alabama and Mississippi, and the U. S. Government. The Pinkertons took the trail of the outlaws, but in the end it was a railroad detective's bullet that finished Rube, the Alabama Wolf.

Although I believe it to be pure fiction that they ever combined forces, the Burrows Gang appeared in a Log Cabin "James Boys" story, #90, Jesse James, Rube Burrows and Company (reprinted as #7, Jesse James Stories, same title) and also in the following:

Secret Service Series (Street & Smith) #40, Rube Burrows' League, by Marline Manly (St. George Rathborne), reprinted in Log Cabin pocket edition only.

Log Cabin Library:

#43, Red Rube Burrows, the King of the Outlaws, by Edwin S. Deane (I have a notation that this was a pseud. of Edward S. Ellis, but it may have been Rathborne).

#87, Rube Burrows' Last Shot, by W. B. Lawson (St. George Rathborne).

#96, The Last of the Burrows Gang, or, Joe Jackson's Last Leap, by Walter L. Hawley (Rathborne).

#123, Rube Burrows' Pard, or, Chased Through the Florida Swamps, by Walter L. Hawley (Rathborne).

In the Log Cabin pocket edition, the title of #123 is changed to Rube Burrows' Dilemma.

He also appeared in an issue of old Cap Collier Library, #388, Rube Burrows, the Outlaw, by W. J. James, Jr. (real name).

Besides the biography in book format published by Arthur Westbrook Co. as #8 of the Adventure Series, entitled, Rube Burrow, the King of Train Robbers, by William Ward, the Regan Pub. Corp. published one, The Alabama Wolf—Rube Burrows, by Clarence E. Ray, and I. & M. Ottenheimer published another, Rube Burrows, the Outlaw, by Harry Hawkeye (Paul Emilius Lowe).

Westbrook's Adventure Series #4 was a biography by William Ward entitled, Harry Tracy, the Death Dealing Oregon Outlaw. It is described thus in a Westbrook advertisement:

"The trail of blood left by this terrible bandit from one side of the State to the other is set forth with all its graphic details in this book. With the narration of the gruesome crimes there is the story of the overwhelming love of this reckless desperado, a love which lured him to his death, a death well fitting his wild, lawless life."

As a matter of fact, Harry Tracy was in love twice, married once. There were no dime novels about him that I know of, only three paper-backed

biographies, the one already mentioned, one by Harry Hawkeye and one by Clarence E. Ray. One-time member of the Hole-in-the-Wall Gang where he gained a reputation for unusual ferocity, Tracy gunned his way out of the Oregon state pen with a pal (whom he shot during their long flight) and by his sure shooting, steely nerve and the luck which sometimes attends a hunted man, he led posses a wild chase for about two months. The killings mounted as he dodged here and there in the big timber country, most of the time a-foot. Even bloodhounds were used in the attempt to track him down. Tracy always seemed to find food when he needed it, ammunition when his stock was running low. He must have had an iron constitution to keep going as he did, with determined trailers constantly after him. The end came for him in a wheat field in the State of Washington, where, wounded, he'd taken refuge from a sheriff's posse. But the slug that wiped out Tracy was from his own gun. He knew when the game was up.

There were bandits galore in the early California diggings, but two of them gained a special notoriety. One was Tiburcio Vasquez, leader of a band of freebooters that spread terror in the mining country and elsewhere before Vasquez was trapped and hung at San Jose. They were a murderous lot, as well as thieves, the Vasquez gang. And Vasquez himself probably had no shade of excuse for his banditry, such as had an equally famous outlaw of California—no reason save love of looting and killing. When I was in Pasadena, years ago, my great-uncle (who knew his California, having gone there in the early '70s), showed me the spot where Tiburcio Vasquez fled from a posse in the rock-strewn Arroyo Seco.

Vasquez appeared in a story of the James Boys, Log Cabin Library 165, Jesse James' Hunt to Death, or, The Terror of Grizzly Hollow, reprinted in Jesse James Stories #29 with the sub-title changed to—The Fate of the Outlaw Vasquez. I'm not sure of the date of Vasquez' death, but think it

was before the James Boys visited California. There was another novel about him in Morrison's Sensational Series #50, *Blood-Dyed Vasquez*, or, *The Terror of the Pacific*, by Lieut. Jameson Torr.

Joaquin Murrieta (the name is spelled several ways) bore an excellent reputation up to the time lawless white men killed his wife, Rosita, and hung his brother on a false charge of horse-stealing. In addition, they applied the lash to Joaquin. At the bottom of all this, apparently, was resentment against Mexicans locating gold claims. Small wonder that Joaquin Murrieta was turned into a demon. He gathered about him a bandit gang and proceeded to terrorize the mining country from end to end. His right bower was a ferocious outlaw called "Three-fingered Jack," real name Manuel Garcia. No amount of blood-letting seemed to satisfy Murrieta. He lasted about three years, was run to earth by the California Rangers under Captain Harry Love. The head of Joaquin was afterward put on exhibition, and with it the hand of Three-fingered Jack.

Joseph E. Badger, Jr., wrote an excellent series of five Joaquin Murrieta tales for Beadle's Dime Library. The first was #28, *Three-fingered Jack*, the Road Agent of the Rockies, or, *The Boy Miner of Hard Luck*. #88 was *Big George*, the Giant of the Gulch, or, *The Five Outlaw Brothers* (in this tale, Murrieta's widow is supposed to exact vengeance for the shooting of her husband by the California Rangers; but Rosita Murrieta was already dead, her death one of the causes of Joaquin's outlawry). #154 was Joaquin, the Saddle King. A Romance of Murrieta's First Fight, #165, Joaquin, the Terrible. The True History of the Three Blows that Changed an Honest Man to a Merciless Demon, and #201, *The Pirate of the Placers*, or, *Joaquin's Death Hunt*.

In #165, the first blow falls when the Hangtown Vigilantes string up Joaquin's brother, Carlos, and a friend, Florez, for horse thefts they never committed. The second blow is when Joaquin is beaten by miners

with a blacksnake whip. The third blow is the murder of his wife, called Carmela in this story, though her name was really Rosita.

William H. Bonney probably never remembered much about his birthplace, New York City, for he was still very young at the time his family went to Kansas, later to New Mexico. In the latter Territory he was to make gunsmoke history as Billy the Kid. Opinion is divided as to what he was really like—a tough hoodlum on horseback or a mild-mannered, easy smiling youngster with uncanny gun skill, who became deadly only under stress and was loyal to those he liked. At least four big budget film biographies of the Kid have shown him as a likable character and quite probably he had some of those qualities.

As an instance of how he valued a friendship, take the case of J. H. Tunstall, an English rancher, who treated the Kid kindly. Tunstall got involved in the cattle war between John Chisum and Major L. C. Murphy and Tunstall was killed by Murphy's "warriors." They made a bad enemy of Billy the Kid by this move—his guns barked flaming retribution for the dead rancher.

On first coming to the Pecos Valley, Billy the Kid had punched cows for the cattle king, John Chisum, but later they had a falling out. The Lincoln County War was now in full swing, and the Kid did his share of killing—one was the shooting of Sheriff William Brady and his deputy, George Hindman. The Kid and his pals never robbed a bank or a train, but rustled plenty of cattle and horses. Governor Lew Wallace, of the Territory of New Mexico, once offered the Kid amnesty if he would come in and take off his shooting-irons. The young outlaw turned him down.

Later, an old acquaintance of the Kid's was turned loose on his trail—Sheriff Pat Garrett. It was sometime before the determined Garrett cornered the Kid and his gang, but he did so finally, one wintry day, at Stinking Spring, and the bitter cold and lack of food caused the outlaws

to surrender, after one, Charlie Bowdre, had been killed.

Put on trial at Mesilla, Billy the Kid was convicted and transferred to the Lincoln County jail until the date of his hanging. But he wasn't fated to die by the rope. He shot his way out of prison, hid for a time among friendly Mexicans. Then Pat Garrett, constantly on the lookout for his escaped prisoner, heard that the Kid had been seen in the vicinity of old Fort Sumner. The sheriff and two deputies, Poe and McKinney, scouted the place, but were not at once rewarded by a meeting with the young outlaw, certain to be violent. It is said that a girl—and the Kid had several sweethearts in his short life—had drawn him back to Sumner. He was there, sure enough, and one night made himself a target for Sheriff Garrett's gun in the bedroom of Pete Maxwell. One shot did it. And so Billy the Kid died, at twenty-one, with, some assert, twenty-one killings recorded against him though there are other estimates of three, nine and eleven notches.

Less than two months after the Kid's violent end, a biography of him appeared in Tousey's Five Cent Wide Awake Library #451, *The True Life of Billy the Kid*, by Don Jenardo (until recently I had thought "Don Jenardo" was a pseudonym of Illion Constellano, but in the bibliography, page 292, of the very fine novel, *BILLY THE KID* by Edwin Corle, published by Duell, Sloan & Pearce / Little, Brown & Co. in 1953, this "dime novel" item is listed as written by Don Jenardo and in parenthesis is the name John Woodruff Lewis). Tousey later published a story in which the Kid figured, in New York Detective Library #411, *Old King Brady and Billy the Kid*, or *The Great Detective's Chase by a New York Detective* (F. W. Doughty), and there were several about him in Morrison's Sensational Series: #3, *Billy the Kid*, #20, *Billy the Kid and His Girl*, #23, *Billy the Kid and the Cowboys*, #26, *Billy the Kid No. 2*—no author given; also one in Bob Brooks Library, #22, *Billy the Kid, King of Highwaymen*—

no author given.

In Diamond Dick, Jr. Weekly #237, *Diamond Dick, Jr.'s Night Dispatch*, or, *Little Thunderbolt at His Best*, mention is made of Billy the Kid. Captain Fan, a Mexican female bandit who crossed the trail of the Diamond Dicks numerous times, had known Billy in the past and held a threat over one Lionel Benson, once assistant cashier at an Albuquerque bank and thought to have robbed the bank, though actually it was the work of the paying teller, Tom Edmunds (related to Captain Fan), who was goaded to it by Billy the Kid. Captain Fan had sent Benson the following warning at the time the Diamond Dicks took hold:

"Ten thousand dollars' reward for the capture of Lionel Benson, offered by the president of the International Bank, Albuquerque. That reward is still open. Billy Bonney, otherwise Billy the Kid, allowed people to think him dead, changed his name and came to the valley of the Pecos to escape the consequences of his crimes. Why might not others do likewise? Beware, Benson! The bankers have not that written confession."

The Buffalo Bill Stories #268 was entitled, *Buffalo Bill and Billy the Kid*, or, *The Desperadoes of Apache Land*, but this was the story of an Indian outlaw.

The End

NEWSY NEWS

by Ralph F. Cummings
Fisherville, Mass.

Wm. (Bill) McCafferty of Waxahachie, Texas, was in the hospital for 8 days early in November, due to an enlarged heart. Take it easy Bill, if you can, for we want to keep you with us for a long, long time to come. Bill says there is a fine article on Joaquim Murieta in the Chicago Tribune for Nov. 18, 1956. This is a fine article of the 1850's.

Our new member of a few months ago, Jack Conroy, says he had heard of the Western Weekly, but had never seen one until I sent him a copy of No. 74. *The Boy Rifles*, by Archie

C. Irons (1912). Jack says if it isn't leaves to rake up and burn, it's snow to shovel. Guess we are all in the same boat, if not, then we are lucky. I've shoveled quite a little snow this winter, too, and just think of it, January 18th, Friday morning, we had it real cold up here at my place, 30 below zero. Seems so that the North Pole is moving to New England. How much colder can it get?

EXCHANGE COLUMN

Wanted—The first, the second, and the last issues published of boy's old 5c weeklies and story papers. Samuel Olnhausen, 824 Chester Ave., East Liverpool, Ohio.

Wanted—The Guillotine; or, The Death of Morgan published by Fred-eric A. Brady. C. V. Clark, 56 Cooper Square, New York 3, N. Y.

Wanted—Joe Parks little magazine "Vanity Fair" Nos. 1 to 15, Collectors

Miscellany 1st series Nos. 7 to 12, 2nd series Nos. 2, 5, 6, 14, 15, 3rd series Nos. 14, 22, 4th series No. 8 to end, 5th series Nos. 1 to 7. Ralph F. Cummings, Fisherville, Mass.

Wanted—Wide Awake Library No. 258, 302, 310, 311, 316, 317, 318, 338, 339, 343 344 1101 Part 1. George French 7 Leo Terrace, Bloomfield, N. J.

Wanted—Beadles ½ Dime #590, 727, 752, 787, 828, 834, 845, 852, 858, 928, Nugget Library #57, 60. Robert Frye, 895 Morgan Ave., Schenectady 9, N. Y.

WANTED

Need a few more Log Cabins to add to my collection. What have you to spare?

Floyd L. Beagle

Box 539

Troy, New York

MEMBERSHIP CHANGES

- 68 George A. Urban, 1002 No. Chicago Ave. So., Milwaukee, Wis. (Error in January listing)
- 199 Richard Burleigh, Sunflower Farm, West Nyack, N. Y. (new member)
- 200 H. A. Duchesne, 41 Carter St., So. Portland 7, Maine (new member)
- 201 Peter A. Scollo, 24 Earle St., Norwood, Mass. (new member)

FOR SALE

Dime Novel Round-Up, No. 1—January, 1931 to No. 291, December, 1956. Make me an offer.

Reckless Ralph's Dime Novel World, Nos. 1 to 6, all that were published. Price 50c.

Dime and Nickel Novel Catalog, 1936-1937—50c

Dime and Nickel Novel Catalog, 1937—50c.

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